

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) An isolated alkaline protease consisting of an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein one or more amino acid residues selected from those located at (a) position 15, (b) position 16, (c) position 166, (d) position 167, (e) position 187, (f) position 346, and (g) position 405 of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 are replaced with the following amino acid residues, respectively:

- (a) histidine,
- (b) threonine or glutamine,
- (c) glycine,
- (d) valine,
- (e) serine,
- (f) arginine, and
- (g) aspartic acid,

wherein said alkaline protease has alkaline protease activity.

2. (Currently Amended) An isolated alkaline protease consisting of an amino acid sequence that is at least 95% homologous to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein one or more amino acid residues selected from those located at (a) position 15, (b) position 16, (c) position 166, (d) position 167, (e) position 187, (f) position 346, and (g) position 405 of the amino acid sequence of ~~SEQ No: 1~~ SEQ ID NO: 1, or at positions corresponding to these positions, are the following amino acid residues or are replaced with the following amino acid residues, respectively:

- (a) histidine,
- (b) threonine or glutamine,

(c) glycine,

(d) valine,

(e) serine,

(f) arginine, and

(g) aspartic acid,

wherein said alkaline protease has alkaline protease activity.

3. – 12. (Canceled)

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

Claims 3-12 have been canceled.

Claim 2 has been amended.

No new matter has been added by the present amendments.